

The mission of the Kentucky Autism Training Center is to enhance supports for persons with autism by providing information and technical assistance to families and service providers across Kentucky.

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CASE STUDY: SCHOOL-BASED TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY KATC

Emily Kirkham, KATC

The Kentucky Autism Training Center (KATC) was contacted by a school district in north central Kentucky to provide training and technical assistance for a team of educators, related service providers, and parents working to meet the needs of a student named Steven. The team requested assistance in the areas of increasing communication using a visual based communication system, incorporating visual supports in the classroom, and creating a reinforcement system to increase academic performance for Steven.

The Student:

Steven is a fourteen-yr-old middle school student diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Explosive Mood Disorder. He is placed in a functional mental disability classroom. Steven is functionally non-verbal, however, he does use some words and echolalia. It was noted by staff that Steven would engage in several self injurious behavior as well as attempting harm to others. Through data collected during my initial observation and communication with the team, I was lead to hypothesize that some behaviors were occurring for three reasons: 1) the student lacked a consistent communication system, 2) the student was avoiding tasks, and 3) the student was not being consistently reinforced.

The Team:

- Lead Teacher
- Three Paraprofessionals
- School Psychologist
- School Principal
- Speech Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Parents
- KATC Trainer
- Director of Special Education

The Training:

The team participated in several small group trainings and hands-on demonstration sessions. The first training I provided was small group training on the Antecedent Behavior Consequence Model. This included how to observe and collect baseline data, the importance of reinforcement systems, updating reinforcement assessment regularly and understanding functional assessment interviews. At this training, the team determined what visual supports were needed to implement Steven's reinforcement system and to increase academic behaviors. The team targeted three behaviors on which to collect data: 1) disruptive outburst, 2) physical aggression, and 3) out of seat/pacing. The team also completed the reinforcement assessment: Steven's reinforcers included candy, chips, drink, weighted blanket, walks, gym and videos.

Steven's Strengths	Challenges
When visual supports are in place, Steven has increased levels of participation, independence and attendance to task.	Steven has a lack of functional communication skills
While getting an accurate IQ measure has been difficult, he appears to have strong cognitive abilities.	Co-founding diagnosis effects his ability to focus and attend to task
	Lack of appropriate social interaction.

CASE STUDY

Continued from cover

The next training on visual based communication was conducted by Carrie Gabbard and me. The goal was to begin the first phase of the communication system immediately following the training. By then end of the training agenda Steven was on Phase Four of his picture based communication system. He was requesting several different items and it was being generalized across all settings including other parts of the school building and home, and he was also using his system with other peers and adults.



On several occasions the team and I disused potential academic modifications to general educational curriculum that will give Steven an outlet to demonstrate his knowledge. One example of a modification made was in geography; while Steven did well in geography, he had a difficult time when asked to scan and point out specific countries on a map. So the team gave him a color coded map with an identical one cut into pieces, and he would then use the cut-out pieces to match and answer specific questions regarding the countries of topic.

After I provided the trainings that addressed the initial concerns of the team, and they demonstrated the acquisition on new techniques to enhance the learning environment for Steven, I outlined additional recommendations for his team:

- The team will update the **reinforcer assessment** to determine new reinforcers on a regular basis. They will use positive reinforcement in all class settings and positive redirection will be used when Steven is showing negative behaviors. If you would like a copy of the reinforcer assessment that was used, please contact the KATC.

- Steven's **schedule** must also be updated. Changes in his routine and new activities will be added to move him toward the goal of independence. For more information on visual supports, refer to Linda Hodgon's book

Visual Strategies: The Key for Improving Communication, Behavior and Social Skills. This book is available in the KATC resource library at, <http://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining/resources>. You may also have interest in Linda's DVD series "Visual Strategies Workshop" which can be found at www.usevisualstrategies.com.

- **Timers** will be used for preferred activities. As soon as the time is up, he will immediately return to work. You can use several different types of timers but the one that seems to work well with individuals with autism is the Time Timer. These can be found at <http://timetimer.com>.

"The KATC staff was very resourceful using a comprehensive team approach, in which data-based decisions helped guide staff training and implementation of such strategies like visual supports, reinforcement, behavior intervention and overall knowledge of autism."

— Kara, school psychologist

- **ABC data** will be taken when necessary, this will be vital with his transition to an inclusive classroom. When taking data, teachers and parents should focus on no more than three behaviors. Focusing on too many behaviors can give inaccurate data. Several types of ABC data forms can be

used. If you would like access to these forms, please contact the KATC.

- Tasks will be set up that he can complete independently with success. These tasks should focus on skills that he can do well, such as math and reading and should be set up so that Steven will not need a lot of prompting or hand-over-hand interaction.
- The task analysis is a break down of the steps of the activity that we would like Steven to do.

Task analysis for daily living skills will build more independence for Steven in his daily routine. The following is a step-by-step break-down of an activity for Steven. For example, a task analysis for brushing your teeth might look like this:

1. Pick up toothpaste and toothbrush
2. Apply toothpaste
3. Turn on water
4. Wet toothbrush
5. Brush teeth
6. Spit
7. Rinse toothbrush
8. Put away materials

- The team will continue to write **social stories** for novel situations as well as frustrating/transition situations. Examples may include outings to the store, field trips, vacations, and expected appropriate behaviors. For more information on social stories, please refer to the <http://www.thegraycenter.org/>.
- Data will continue on Steven's prompt dependency. The **hierarchy of prompting** will be considered when teaching a new skill, most to least or least to most. The team will always consider how to fade the prompts. For more information on how to fade prompts, contact the KATC.



A **visual based communication system** is vital to Steven’s success and his communication book must be available to him at all times. Steven’s communication book will travel from home to school and vice versa. Pictures will increase with each stage. One team member should be designated to make the pictures as Steven’s vocabulary increases. For more information on visual based systems, please refer to the following website <http://www.pecs.com>.

- Steven’s **sensory profile** will be updated and sensory breaks will continue for Steven when necessary. If you would like a copy of the sensory profile used, please contact KATC.

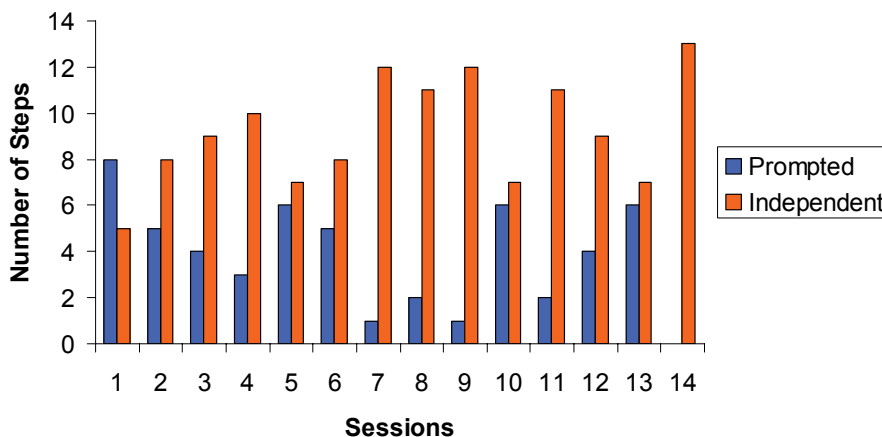


The team is looking forward to providing Steven with the visual supports, social skill strategies, and functional communication to ensure his success at school and in the community. I think it is important to note that all students with autism are unique and require individualized supports. However, the strategies that I outlined above are consistent with “best practices.”

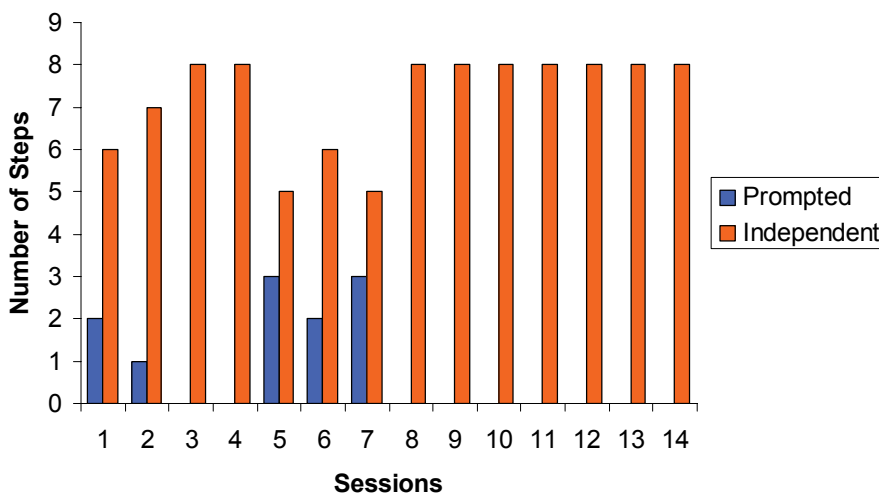
The following graphs demonstrate the use of visual supports with two daily living skills, teeth brushing and toileting. The data was taken for two weeks in the classroom. Teeth brushing occurred after lunch as well as toileting. The data was collected by several different individuals in the classroom but the setting was the same in the classroom bathroom.

As you can see Steven was prompted through eight out of the 14 steps of brushing teeth on day one. By day 14 using only the visual support provided to him, he completed all steps of teeth brushing independently. The same is true for toileting. By the final day Steven was doing all steps independently.

Brushing Teeth Using Visual Supports



Toileting Using Visual Supports



AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS RELATED SUPPORT GROUPS IN KENTUCKY (WINTER 2008)

In the past several years, the awareness of autism has dramatically increased in our Commonwealth. This increased public awareness of autism can be attributed to the grass roots efforts of support groups across the state bringing together families and professionals. If you have any questions or would like to amend this list, please contact Rebecca Grau at the Kentucky Autism Training Center at 502-852-7799 or rebecca.grau@louisville.edu

Name of Group Area served	Mailing Address Web Address	Group Contacts	Meeting Schedule and group activities
Autism Society of Kentuckiana (A.S.K.) (Louisville and Southern Indiana)	Autism Society of Kentuckiana P.O. Box 90 Pewee Valley, KY 40056 www.ask-lou.org	Deanna Gadjen (812) 949-2922 armj01@aol.com Laurie Spezzano (502) 222-4706 lauriespezzano@insightbb.com Vonya Gresham vgresham@hospices.org	2nd Saturday of the Month 10 a.m. – 12 noon Kentucky School for the Blind 1867 Frankfort Ave. Louisville
Parents of Autistic Children Serving the area of Southeast Kentucky	www.p4ac.com 41 Trent Circle, London, KY 40744	Kim Chaney kimchaney@adelphia.net Ron & Kelly Lewis Home: (606) 864-8645 Ron cell: (502) 424-8442 Kelly cell: (606) 312-1659 rlewis8645@charter.net	Meeting Schedule: Third Sunday of every month at 3:00 p.m. at L&N Federal Credit Union London
Autism Society of the Bluegrass (Central KY served)	Sara Spragens Autism Society of the Bluegrass 453 Rookwood Parkway Lexington, KY 40505 www.asbg.org	Sara Spragens (859) 299-9000 sspragens@insightbb.com	Last Monday of the month 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. St. Michael's Episcopal Church 2025 Bellefonte Dr. Lexington
Autism Society of Western Kentucky (Henderson, Daviess, Union, Webster, McLean, Ohio, and Hancock Counties)	Autism Society of Western Kentucky P.O. Box 1647 Henderson, KY 42419-1647	(270) 826-0510	No specific support group meetings. Call for a list of upcoming events and resource library hours. Annual Conference
Autism Society of Greater Cincinnati Autism Society of Greater Cincinnati	P.O. Box 43027 Cincinnati, OH 45243-0027 http://www.autismcincy.org/	Ann Hagerstrand ann@hagerstrand.com asgc@cinci.rr.com	Check web site for meeting and event schedule
FEAT of Louisville, Inc.	FEAT of Louisville, INC. P.O. Box 5214 Louisville, KY 40255 (502) 609-2901 featoflouisville.org	Anne Gregory (502) 254-7733 Amgregor@aol.com	Monthly meetings are held the first Thursday evening of the month at 7 p.m., Highland Presbyterian Church. 1011 Cherokee Road Louisville
Barren River Area Autism Support Groups (Barren, Hart, Monroe, Logan, Butler, Allen, Edmonson, Simpson, and Warren Counties)	Barren River Area Autism Support Group TJ Samson Resource Center 922 Happy Valley Rd. Glasgow, KY 42141	Linda Veldman schooltherapies@tjsamson.org	4th Thursday of the month at TJ Samson Resource Center at 6:30 p.m. Glasgow
Danville / Boyle County Autism Parent Support Group (Boyle, Mercer, Casey, Lincoln, and Garrard Counties)	Julie DeCoteau 1094 Glendive Ct Danville, KY 40422	Julie and Mark DeCoteau markdecoteau@bellsouth.net Melissa Caudill (859) 236-8812 gmcbrc@bellsouth.net	Meets Third Sunday of the month at 6 p.m., at wilderness Trace Child Development Center. 409 N Stewarts Lane Danville



AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS RELATED SUPPORT GROUPS IN KENTUCKY (WINTER 2008)
(CONTINUED)

Name of Group Area served	Mailing Address Web Address	Group Contacts	Meeting Schedule and group activities
Eastern Kentucky University Autism and Related Disorders	Rita Brockmeyer Eastern Kentucky University Autism and Related Disorders 100 Ross Drive Richmond, KY 40475 www.psychology.eku.edu/Autism/general.html	Rita Brockmeyer (859) 623-6074 Myra Beth Bundy MyraBeth.Bundy@eku.edu	Support Group Student Conference Grandparent Conference Teen & Young Adult Social Group
Parent and Professional Autism Support Group in Powell County (Wolf, Montgomery, Clark, and Powell Counties)	Parent and Professional Autism Support Group in Powell County Stanton Elementary School P.O. Box 367 Breckenridge St. Stanton, KY 40380	Marilyn Barnett (606) 663-2854	2nd Tuesday of the month 4:00 –5:30 p.m. Powell County Middle School Stanton
Hopkins County Autism Awareness Advocates	Vicky and Bob Renn Hopkins County Autism Awareness Advocates 89 Westside Ave. Madisonville, KY 42431	Vicky and Bob Renn (270) 825-9067 Home (270) 825-5182 Work bwren@yahoo.com	Call for meeting schedule
Bowling Green Autism Asperger's Support Group		Karen Thomas (270) 781-2118 karen@accessky.net	For more information, contact Karen Thomas
Parent Resources in Special Education (Georgetown Area)		Tracey Hagan (502) 867-9903 or (502) 867-3822 tysmom30@adelphia.net	3rd Saturday of each month at Scott County Public Library
Franklin County Autism and Related Disorder Support Group	Belinda Henson Hearn Elementary School Library	Belinda Henson Parent Resource Center (502) 352-2425 Belinda.Henson@Franklin.kyschools.us	Group will then meet on the 2 nd Monday of each school month. If school is cancelled, for whatever reason, on the day the support group meets, the meeting will be cancelled.
Autism Support Group of Muhlenberg County	101 Poplar St. Central City, Ky 42203	Wendy Everly (270) 977-3206 weverly@mydotspot.com	Contact Wendy Everly for more information regarding meetings.
FEAT of WKY	www.featofwesternky.org	Tammi Halvorson tammih7@comcast.net	801 N 29th Street is the Easter Seals address—we use the Child Development Center (the newer location). Please contact Tammi Halvorson for meeting times.
Autism Support 4 Lake Cumberland		Donna Littrell, President, (606) 561-8282 awareness4autism@gmail.com Julie Price, Vice President, (606) 274-0188 kytprice@peoplepc.com	3rd Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. First Christian Church, Hwy. 39 Somerset

Join the KATC's Listserv!

Learn about up-coming events, trainings, workshops, support groups, disability related information and other useful information for families and professionals in the autism community. To join the KATC's listserv, please contact rebecca.grau@louisville.edu or 502-852-7799.



SAVE THE DATE: AUTISM INSTITUTE 2008

The 9th Annual Autism Institute is scheduled for June 5-7, 2008 and will be held at the Marriott Downtown, Louisville, KY. The institute features strategies and techniques to enhance the lives of those affected by autism. Registration opens in February. For more information, go to <http://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining>



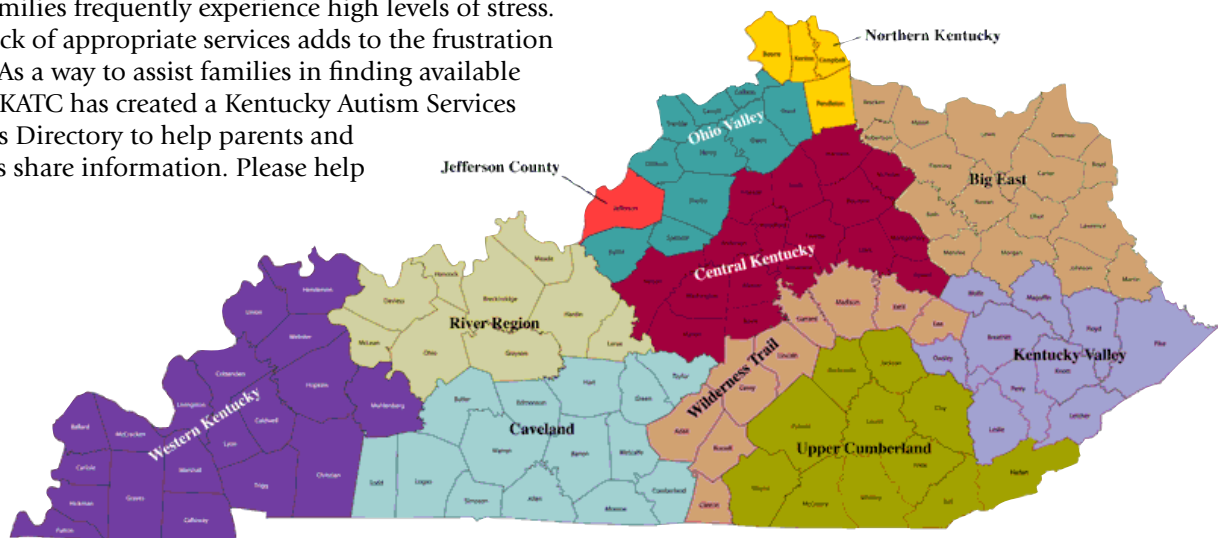
REGISTER TODAY!

THE KATC LAUNCHES THE KENTUCKY AUTISM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS ONLINE SEARCHABLE DATABASE!

Check it out this new feature at <http://katcproviders.louisville.edu/>. This database is searchable by region, county, age and service.

The demands of caring for an individual with autism are great, and families frequently experience high levels of stress. Often, the lack of appropriate services adds to the frustration of families. As a way to assist families in finding available services, the KATC has created a Kentucky Autism Services and Supports Directory to help parents and professionals share information. Please help

us build this voluntary database of information. For more information about the database, or to find out how to be listed, please visit the KATC's web-site at <http://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining>.



GIVING TO THE KATC

It seems you hear about autism every day in the media. In 2007, a Centers for Disease Control report found that one in 150 children in America today have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Where do families and educators and related professionals affected by autism in Kentucky go for research-based information and support? The answer is: The Kentucky Autism Training Center.

KATC has served the citizens of the Commonwealth for nine years, providing support and training to families and professionals across Kentucky in the following ways:

1. The Amanda L. King Resource Center at KATC is the only source of autism-specific information available to all citizens of Kentucky. With this role comes a responsibility to be the most effective and far-reaching resource possible.

2. The KATC hosts an annual Autism Institute that brings together families, educators and related professionals from across Kentucky together to network, share ideas and learn from top researchers in the field of autism.
3. KATC staff travel the Commonwealth to provide the following services:
 - Conduct teacher training
 - Local autism-related support groups
 - Promote community awareness
 - Provide professional development opportunities.
4. The KATC gathers, synthesizes and disseminates information regarding best practices and supports, (e.g. creation of Kentucky Family Guide for Autism Spectrum Disorders, informative website, dynamic listserv and development of a data-

base of service providers across the state).

There is no better way for you to provide families and professionals with opportunities to access support, information, resources and training that will enhance the lives of individuals with autism.

That's why we are asking you to make a gift to KATC. Please take a moment right now to visit <https://www.applyweb.com/public/contribute?s=UOFLGIVE>, or contact KATC at 502-852-4631, to learn more.



The Amanda L. King Resource Center is located in the Kentucky Autism Training Center offices at 911 S. Brook Street. The resource library is a collection of materials pertaining to Autism Spectrum Disorders available for checkout to families and professionals across the state of Kentucky.

Using the Resource Library Request Form, (located at <http://louisville.katc.org>).

AMANDA L. KING RESOURCE CENTER

[edu/education/kyautismtraining/resources](http://www.katc.org/education/kyautismtraining/resources)), list the titles you are interested in checking out, and include an additional choice as some books may be checked out. If you are unsure of a specific title but are interested in particular topic, please send an e-mail or call, and we will try to match a book to your interest. If you live out of the local area, please mail the completed form to: KATC Resource Center, 911 S. Brook St. Louisville KY 40203. Once your form is received we will mail the requested materials to you.

As always, we welcome the suggestion of additional titles to carry in our resource library.

The Amanda L. King Resource Library is open from 9:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by appointment.

If you wish to make a donation to the KATC Resource Center, please contact Rebecca Grau at 502-852-4631 rebecca.grau@louisville.edu.

KATC Wish List

- Plastic tubs for toys and training materials
- DVD/TV Combo
- Children's DVDs
- Color Laser Printer
- Laminating Paper
- Velcro
- 4X6 Binders
- Sensory Toys
- Wooden Puzzles
- Large "kid friendly" throw pillows
- Bean Bags
- Washable Markers
- Coloring Books

OUT AND ABOUT: PREPARING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Amy Bixler Coffin and Jill Hudson have developed a to-the-point resource that will be used again and again by parents and educators. The focus of *Out and About*:

Preparing Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders to Participate in Their Communities is about

“the every day” how to of enabling and supporting individuals on the autism spectrum to participate, to the maximum extent possible, in the community around them.

In this simple book, the authors provide a framework for identifying the areas where an individual with ASD may need support to participate



more fully and successfully in community activities. The framework, created as a Blueprint to be filled in, depending on the child and the outing being planned, that lists 10 areas identified in best practice as effective types of support for children with ASD.

Areas include: waiting plan, communication, social, visual, hidden curriculum, sensory, motivation, behavior, transition, and siblings or other students. For each area on the Blueprint, parents, teachers, coaches, family members, or anybody who lives or works with the child, fills in ahead of time the support that best matches the child’s needs for a given event.

The hope is that the specially designed Blueprint will become second nature

to its users as they become more familiar with the areas of support the child needs in various situations.

Review taken from the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) Quarterly Newsletter (Fall 2007 – Volume 1/Issue 1)

Hudson, J., & Coffin, A.B. (2007). *Out and About: Preparing children with Autism Spectrum Disorders to Participate in Their Communities*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.



WHEN YOUR CHILD IS DIAGNOSED WITH HIGH-FUNCTIONING AUTISM OR ASPERGER’S DISORDER

By Diane Adreon, M.A.

University of Miami/Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

Understanding the “Autism Spectrum” Autism is a scary word. When most people think of autism, they think of “classic autism” as often portrayed in old movies and descriptions of children who frequently developed minimal language and had tremendous difficulty interacting with others and learning a wide range of skills. The definition of autism has changed considerably and includes a much broader group of individuals, including individuals with language and average to above-average intelligence. In the diagnostic manual used by doctors and psychologists in the United States, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV, Text Revision (DSM-IVTR)*, what we often call autism spectrum disorders is technically under the umbrella diagnostic category of Pervasive

Developmental Disorders (PDD). As one might imagine, this is not a “popular” phrase. However, it is an important phrase because we need to recognize that an autism spectrum disorder significantly affects many aspects of functioning. The most common autistic spectrum disorders are Autistic Disorder (autism), Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger’s Disorder. Sometimes doctors will say that a child has PDD; however, PDD is not a specific diagnosis. In all likelihood it means that the doctor believes that the child has one of the pervasive developmental disorders.

Why Do Different Professionals Give My Child Different Labels?

It is common for parents to take



their child to different professionals and receive different diagnoses. One doctor may say, “He doesn’t have autism. He has PDD-NOS”. Another professional may say “it’s not autism or PDD-NOS, but rather — Asperger Syndrome.” There is little agreement among diagnosticians as to which label most appropriately describes a given child. Look at the symptoms your child



Communication



Restricted range of interests, patterns and behaviors

is exhibiting, rather than the label. Programming needs to address your child's symptoms.

I Don't Want Him to be Labeled

Undoubtedly, receiving a diagnosis is very upsetting. However, learning that your child has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be very helpful to you, your family, and your child. Many parents, who have been searching for a long time to understand their child's struggles, are relieved to finally have a diagnosis that makes sense. Learning about ASD is the first step in helping you learn about your child and give you the necessary tools to serve as "conductor of his orchestra". It is through a partnership between parents and professionals that issues can be discussed from various viewpoints to help parents determine: (1) what skills are most important for my child to work on? and (2) what is the best use of our family's' financial resources to help our child?

Another reason a label can be important is because it may allow you to access funding for services. In some cases, children may be eligible for services if they are diagnosed with autism; but not if the diagnosis is PDD-NOS or Asperger's Disorder. Because of these types of issues, it is a good idea for parents to keep all diagnostic records and then decide what would be useful in securing services for their child.

Areas of Impairment in ASD

In the United States, medical doctors and psychologists use the DSM-IV TR (*Diagnostic & Statistical Manual*

of Mental Disorders-4th Edition, Text Revision) to classify developmental and psychiatric disorders. In the DSM-IV TR, individuals with ASD are described as having impairments in three primary areas: (a) social interaction; (b) communication; and (c) restricted range of interests, patterns, and behaviors.

Many children with autism spectrum disorders have related difficulties. This often includes problems with attention, organization, emotional regulation, behavior and motivation. Many children with ASD have intact or enhanced skills in certain areas, such as

long-term rote memory and attention to details. Many also have specific weaknesses in areas of learning. This might be in academic areas such as reading comprehension, or other areas of brain functioning, such as how quickly (or slowly) they process information. Learning how your child functions across all of these areas can be very helpful in prioritizing goals and helping your child improve his skills.

"The Doctor Said My Child is High-Functioning." What Does that Mean?

There is not a universally agreed-upon



Ms. Adreon has served as Associate Director of the University of Miami/Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism & Related Disabilities (UM-CARD) since 1993. Ms. Adreon has worked with individuals with autism and their families for over 25 years. She received her Master of Arts degree from Teacher's College, Columbia University (1982) where she majored in special education and applied behavior analysis. She is currently a doctoral student in special education. Prior to working in Florida, Ms. Adreon served as Program Coordinator and later Training Coordinator of the Judevine Center for Autism in St. Louis, MO. Ms. Adreon has presented and consulted nationally and internationally on high-functioning autism and Asperger's Disorder and has authored two books on autism spectrum disorders, *Practical Strategies that Work! Helpful Hints for all Educators of Students with High-functioning Autism, Asperger Syndrome and Related Disabilities* (2006) (with Myles & Gitlitz), and *Asperger Syndrome and Adolescence: Practical Solutions for School Success* (2001) (with Myles). In 2002 she received the Autism Society Literary Achievement Award (with Myles). Ms. Adreon was an invited guest editor of a special issue on *Assessment of Children and Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Assessment for Effective Intervention*. In addition, Ms. Adreon is the editor of the *Florida Asperger Syndrome Times* (FASTimes) and has authored several articles on high-functioning autism and Asperger's Disorder. She is on the Editorial Board of *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities* and is a consulting editor for *Intervention in School and Clinic*, and the *International Association for Special Education*.

definition of high-functioning autism spectrum disorders. In all likelihood, what the diagnostician is saying is that your child has a significant amount of language and your child does not also have mental retardation, along with the ASD. An IQ of 70 or above is considered to be above the cut-off for mental retardation.



If My Child is High-Functioning, Does This Mean That His Problem is Mild?

Unfortunately, having an autism spectrum disorder is not a mild problem. By definition, to be diagnosed with an ASD the child has to have significant impairment in functioning.

However, we have improved our ability to diagnose ASDs earlier and are rapidly expanding our knowledge of strategies that can help children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders. In all likelihood, this means that the outcomes for individuals with high-functioning ASDs are improving all the time.

What Are Some of the First Steps I Can Take to Help my Child?

1. Take care of yourself and your relationships. By addressing your own emotional well-being and nurturing the important relationships in your life, you will assist your family in becoming more resilient.

2. Seek professional help, whether it is through face-to-face support groups, on-line support groups, or seeing a counselor or therapist. The OASIS: Online Asperger Syndrome Information and Support (www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger) website includes a number of on-line forums for individuals with Asperger Syndrome and their families. It also contains a listing of support groups throughout the United States and abroad. Take some extra time to look over the user-friendly articles and information that are available there, as well.

3. Learn about autism spectrum disorders. There's a tremendous amount of information available. It is difficult, however, to determine what information is most reputable. Seek out professionals you can trust to provide you with information as objectively as possible.

Spotlight on the KATC Autism Institute

Join Ms. Adreon at the KATC Autism Institute on Friday, June 6th, 2008. Her session is titled "Survival Strategies for Working/Living with Individuals with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders"

SESSION DESCRIPTION:

This session will address practical and simple strategies to help create successful experiences for individuals with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders at school, at home and in the community.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will be able to describe difficulties often experienced by individuals with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders (ASD) at home, at school and in the community.
- Participants will be able to generate several support strategies that can be used to support students with ASD during common problem times during the school day.
- Participants will be able to generate strategies to help parents get through situations that are often difficult at home and in community settings.



Resources from Ms. Adreon

Organizations

Autism Society of America
www.autism-society.org

ASA promotes awareness of ASD through education and advocacy. Their website contains information about state and local autism societies and other related resources information on their annual conference.

Organization for Autism Research
www.researchautism.org

OAR provides funding for research studies that investigate treatments, educational approaches, and statistical information on autism. Their website contains monthly newsletters, a comprehensive list of resources, and an overview of practical on-going research in the field. In addition, OAR offers three comprehensive and useful resource guides that can be downloaded free of charge from their website. These include: "Parent's Guide to Research", "Life Journey through Autism: An Educator's Guide" and "Life Journey through Autism: An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome".

Recommended Books

Attwood, T. (1998). *Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Howlin, P. (1998). *Children with Autism and Asperger Syndrome; A Guide for Practitioners and Carers*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Myles, B.S. (2005). *Children and Youth with Asperger Syndrome: Strategies for Success in Inclusive Settings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Myles, B.S., Adreon, D., & Gitlitz, D. (2006). *Simple Strategies that Work! Helpful Hints for All Educators of Students with Asperger Syndrome, High-functioning Autism, and Related Disabilities*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing.

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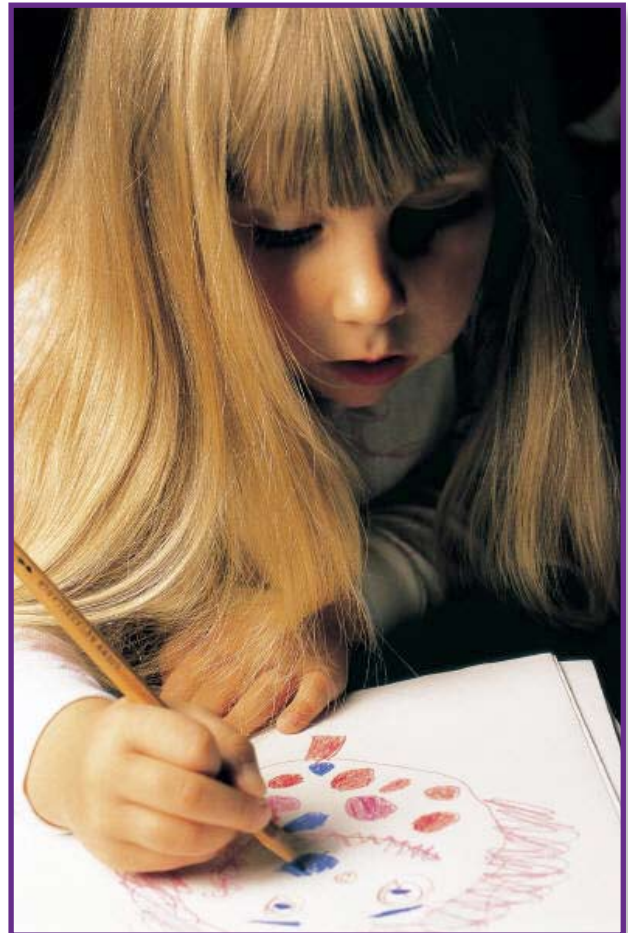
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